

February 29, 2016

Dear Instructional Quality Commission Members,

California public schools have a diverse student population with a wide range of ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. As a result, the K-12 public education system must ensure that all students are provided with a curriculum and course materials that make education relevant to their experiences and backgrounds. Especially given the persistent achievement gaps between students of color and their white peers and economically disadvantaged students and their more affluent peers, the content framework developed at the state level plays an important role in ensuring that all students can achieve to their potential.

After reviewing the draft History-Social Science Framework and actively following Instructional Quality Commission meetings, CSBA wants to thank commission members, staff and all external groups that have contributed to ensure that the principles of equity and inclusion are included in this document. While we understand the challenge of including all perspectives in a History-Social Science Framework and recognize that no framework is perfect, the revisions move us forward in ensuring that our diverse students see themselves in the content delivered in schools. In particular, we want to highlight two sections of the framework that we think will play a positive role in helping to close achievement gaps:

- **Chapter 20: Access and Equity.** CSBA supports the concepts presented in this chapter, which include considerations for ensuring that content is accessible to every student. This chapter discusses considerations for culturally responsive teaching, English learners, advanced learners, students living in poverty, students with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students. These are considerations that we fully support and look forward to working with other education stakeholders to translate them into practice within schools. We hope that the discussion of access and equity is an important focus area during the roll-out of the framework.
- **Chapter 23: Criteria for Evaluating Instructional Materials: Kindergarten Through Grade Eight.** CSBA supports efforts to ensure that course materials reflect the diversity of our students, in a way that affirms their culture and makes education relevant to their experiences. Far too often, African American, Latino, Native American or Alaskan Native, Pacific Islander, and other students of color attend school without learning about the positive contributions of historical figures with similar backgrounds. The criteria for evaluating instructional materials is a starting point for increasing the diversity in instructional materials. Specifically, we want to highlight the language under Category 1: History–Social Science Content/Alignment with Standards, “11. Numerous examples are presented of women and men from different demographic groups who used their learning and intelligence to make important contributions to democratic practices and society and to science and technology.” As the IQC considers an adoption process in 2017, we hope that they seize this as an opportunity to help increase access to culturally relevant instructional materials. The state

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-level adoption process should ensure that approved materials truly reflect the backgrounds and experiences of their students, while district leaders should be provided with additional guidance in the selection process.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the draft framework and thanks to all involved in making this a stronger document.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vernon M. Billy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Vernon" being more prominent.

Vernon M. Billy
CEO & Executive Director